



North Carolina
Community Development Block Grant
Disaster Recovery
Citizen Participation Plan
Hurricane Matthew



Background

The State of North Carolina is a recipient of a U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Grant appropriated in accordance of the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114-223). This describes the applicable waivers and alternative requirements, relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, the grant award process, criteria for the action plan approval, and eligible disaster recovery activities. The funds are being made available to assist disaster recovery efforts in response to Hurricane Matthew as described in Federal Register Notices published Wednesday, January 18, 2017, at 82, 5591 and Monday, August 7, 2017, at 82 36812.

The primary goal of this Citizen Participation Plan is to provide all North Carolina citizens with an opportunity to participate in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the State's recovery programs. The plan set forth policies and procedures for citizen participation, which are designed to maximize the opportunity for citizen involvement in the community recovery process.

Public Hearing

Unlike the Citizen Participation Plan for the Consolidated Plan process, there is no requirement for a public hearing relative to the CDBG-DR Action Plan. The Federal Register published on November 21, 2016 contains a list of waivers which permits changes to the State of North Carolina's Consolidated Plan Citizen Participation Plan process. While the requirement that the CDBG-DR be consistent with the Consolidated Plan was waived, the State will up-date its plan in accordance with the Federal Register instructions as applicable. The State's disaster recovery needs will be incorporated into the next required up-date of the Consolidated Plan. In addition, the State will ensure that all grantees adhere to fair housing requirements and will capture, review and maintain records of its status.

Contact Information: Citizens may make comments or request information regarding the Consolidated Planning process by mail, telephone, facsimile transmission, or email to the Consolidated Planning Coordinator, NC Department of Commerce 4346 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4346, Tel. (919) 814-4600, TDD 1-800-735-2962, Fax (919) 715-0096, email ipayne@nccommerce.com. The State will respond to written comments as appropriate.

Encouragement of Citizen Participation and Outreach: The State will invite and encourage citizen participation in the Action Plan process with a focus on outreach to low- and moderate-income persons, racial/ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and persons with Limited English Proficiency.

Strategy: The State will advertise opportunities for public participation in The Action Plan process through stated, federal, local governments, tribal communities, public housing, housing-related service providers, for-profit developers, professional organizations, other known constituency groups, and citizens who have requested notification. Additionally, the State will advertise through:

- 1) Groups, organizations, agencies, and churches providing services to or advocating for low- and moderate-income persons, racial/ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and persons with Limited English Proficiency; and
- 2) Media sources that have direct contact with low- and moderate-income persons, racial/ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and persons with Limited English Proficiency.

The Department of Commerce is committed to ensuring that all populations impacted by the storm are aware of the programs to assist in the recovery from Hurricane Matthew. Through in persons meeting, outreach events, online and traditional media, the State has publicized the programs and conducted outreach efforts throughout the storm impacted areas. In addition, the Governor's Office, has engaged a grass-roots community driven process that engages the public as a key stakeholder in the planning and rebuilding process.

Public Notice and Comment Period

A comment period of at least fourteen (14) days, as required by HUD, shall be provided for citizens, affected local governments, and other interested parties an opportunity to comment on substantial amendments to the Action Plan. Notices advertising the public comment period will be placed in daily newspapers, non-English newspapers, and weekly community newspapers.

In accordance with CDBG-DR requirements, the State of North Carolina has developed and will maintain a comprehensive website regarding all disaster recovery activities assisted with these funds. The State will post all Action Plans and amendments on the State's CDBG-DR website www.nccommerce.gov or www.readync.org to give citizens an opportunity to read the plan and to submit comment(s). This website is featured prominently on, and is easily navigable from, the State's homepage www.nc.gov.

Paper copies of the Action Plan will be available in both English (including large, 18pt type) and Spanish.

Comments and complaints may be submitted as follows:

- Electronically on the NC Department of Commerce CDBG-DR website www.nccommerce.gov.
- Written comments may be mailed to:
North Carolina Department of Commerce

Consolidated Planning Coordinator
4346 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-4346

- By telephone: (919) 814-4600, TDD 1-800-735-2962 or Fax (919) 715-0096
- By Email: www.compliance@nccommerce.com

At the end of the comment period, all comments shall be reviewed, and a State response will be incorporated into the document. A summary of the comments and the State's responses will be submitted to HUD with the Action Plan. The Action Plan and any amendments including public comments and responses will be posted on the State's CDBG-DR website.

Individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Based on LEP data within the impacted areas collected by the State, both the instructions for commenting on, and access to, the Action Plan will be translated into Spanish. Comments will be accepted through the online commenting form in English and Spanish. The State will make every possible effort to translate and consider comments submitted in any other language within the timeframe.

Persons with Disabilities

As noted above, hard copies of Action Plans will be available in large print format (18pt font size) at the location listed above. The online materials will also be accessible for the visually impaired. For more information on how people with disabilities can access and comment on the Action Plan, dialing (800) 735-2962.

Response to Citizen Complaints

The State of North Carolina shall provide a written response to every complaint relative to the CDBG-DR Plan within fifteen (15) working days of receipt if practicable. The state will execute its Appeals Process in response to complaints and will require grantees to adopt a similar process that weighs complaints through an unbiased process of the citizen's peers. The process will be tiered whereby applicants will be able to appeal a decision and received further review from another level.

Performance Review

The requirements for submission of a Performance Evaluation Report (PER) are waived for the CDBG-DR program. As an alternative, the State's Action Plan must be entered into HUD's Disaster Recovery Grant Reporting (DRGR) system. The State will submit a performance report in a form to be prescribed by HUD no later than thirty days following the end of each quarter, beginning after the first full calendar quarter after grants award and continuing until all funds have been expended. The quarterly reports shall use the DRGR system and be posted on the State's website within three days of submission.

Action Plan Amendments

In the case of amendments, the State of North Carolina will follow two alternative citizen participation processes. In the cases of a substantial amendment, the procedures detailed above will be followed.

- 1) A substantial amendment shall be defined as: a change in program benefit, beneficiary or eligibility criteria, the allocation or re-allocation of more than \$5 million, or the addition or deletion of an activity.
- 2) For amendments considered to be non-substantial, the State shall notify HUD, but public comment is not required. Every amendment, substantial or not, shall be numbered sequentially and posted on the website.

Applicant Status:

The usual methods of notifying citizen of their application status regarding CDBG-DR programs involves communicating through interviews, telephone, email and written. In addition to these very effective methods, the North Carolina CDBG-DR program will include a system where applicants will be able to access their status online.

The Final HUD-Approved Action Plan

Following HUD approval of the Action Plan or amendment(s), it will be posted on the State's CDBG-DR website. Copies of the Final Action Plan will also be made available upon request.